Can Hoffa Tie Up the St. Lawrence Seaway?

By John Baker White

CHALLENGE *to* AUTHORITY

WHILE OFFICIALS of the Canadian and American governments are completing their plans for the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway by the Queen and the President, James Riddle Hoffa is aiming to establish a stranglehold over it.

His declared objective is to paralyze its shipping and docks—when he thinks fit. This is no idle threat.

Hoffa is president of what the United States Senate investigators called a "hoodlum empire"—The International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

The Brotherhood is certainly the biggest, and probably the most wealthy, trade union in the world. It is also the most corrupt, and makes a regular practice of using bribery to gain its ends.

When bribery fails, its squads of strong-arm thugs are called in with their blackjacks and razors. The Union controls 1,600,000 members and has reserve funds totalling more than $50,000,000.

The power of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters does not lie in its size, its riches or its gangsters. Its members are made up of transport drivers, municipal employees, seamen and dockers.

It has a close liaison with the Communist-dominated International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, led by the extremist Harry Bridges.

This union is not affiliated to the International Transport Workers Federation, to which most of the free world dockers' organizations belong, but it has close association with the Moscow-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions in Prague.

In appearance James Riddle Hoffa is an insignificant little man. He would pass unnoticed in a crowd except that whenever he leaves his office his strong-arm squad closes in round him. Even on the platform, where he is an able rabble-rouser, his back is always guarded.

His ambition is to make himself the most powerful man in the United States—not ex-will extend his "empire" from the Arctic cluding the President. He has said that he Circle to the Panama Canal.

He is already firmly entrenched along the American side of the St. Lawrence Seaway. A considerable number of the dockers and warehousemen on the Great Lakes are holders of the Teamsters card.

Others who are not, fear its picket lines of hand-picked thugs, or belong to the Communist-dominated union. The same applies to the crews of the ships trading across the Lakes.

Now Hoffa is moving in on Canada. "My aim," he said, "is to enlist 250,000 Canadians into the Brotherhood." And he added: "I am prepared to spend $3,000,000 to get them."

He has opened up an operations centre in Toronto with one of his most able lieutenants in charge. The surprising thing is that, like Hoffa, this organizer is confident of quick success despite the union's notorious record.

"The Seaway will be ours by June," was Hoffa's boast to New York pressman.

American trade unionism is still 10 to 15 years behind its British counterpart in its outlook and methods. In Britain the Teamsters would never have been allowed by the other unions to achieve the power it has today.

After the two great American trade union groups—the American Federation of Labor and the Conference of Industrial Organization declared a truce in their long battle, they formed the great AFL-CLO combine.

Having proved the Teamsters guilty of corruption and hoodlum methods they expelled the union, without attempting to destroy its power.

Laughing at this action, James Riddle Hoffa laid his plans for a federation of transport unions, working in liaison with the Harry Bridges setup.

He knew that such an amalgamation would be able to paralyze American industry and communications. He also aimed to recruit municipal workers, particularly the police, into his union.

JAMES HOFFA
. . . can this man's minions defy Canadian-American authorities?

The United States Senate and Congress both set up special committees to investigate the Hoffa "empire." They found the charges of corruption proved.

Robert Kennedy, chief counsel of the congressional committee, warned:

"The Teamsters as present constituted can destroy the economies of both Canada and the United States."

Hoffa sees nothing odd in recruiting policemen and gangsters into the same union. Nor do his lieutenants lose any sleep over charges of bribery.

Recently a local Teamster president in Tennessee was put on trial for income tax frauds. He admitted that he had used the union's funds to bribe a judge, adding that the union had "no objection to bribery as such."

Recently New York had a taste of the methods Hoffa is likely to use in "Operation Seaway."

He decided to organize the city's police into the Teamsters, and appointed Henry Feinstein, president of a city employees' group of the union, as a special organizer to do the job.

Police Commissioner Kennedy promptly announced that any policeman who joined the Teamsters would be expelled from the force.

Feinstein described this action as "unfair to our union and all organized labor." On Jan. 12 he put a picket-line of strong-arm men round police headquarters and pickets on the precinct stations and prowl car depots.

Their orders: to stop the delivery of all supplies of food, fuel, petrol, and other stores to the stations.

On Jan. 14, Hoffa decided it would be wise to restrain his colleague. He announced that the pickets had been put on for publicity purposes only, and would not stop supplies going in. Nevertheless Feinstein is going ahead with his plans.

Having already taken over the New York Sanitation Men's Association, making Hoffa all-powerful over the city's dustmen, street cleaners and drainage staffs, Feinstein feels confident that he can capture the police as well.

Meanwhile, Hoffa himself is directing a parallel operation, designed to get into the Teamsters all civilian workers in America's secret space-rocket base at Cape Canaveral in Florida.

This is the nature of Hoffa's challenge to legitimate American and Canadian trade unionism. But it is more than that. It is a challenge to the authority of both governments.

* * * * * * * * *

Meet the Author

LT.-COL. JOHN BAKER WHITE, former Conservative MP for Canterbury, Kent, and well-known author and journalist, has been an astute and outspoken observer of international affairs for many years.

He was one of the first to draw public attention to the growing menace of Communism. In two books published before the Second World War—"Red Russia Arms" and "The Red Network"—he warned of the growing power of the Soviet Army and the insidious spread of Communism throughout the world. He has dedicated himself to the cause of fighting Communism.

Col. White has had an incredibly varied career. In his youth he worked on farms, down a coal mine and joined a circus. He studied the structure of industry, and social science in London and other industrial centres, and during the 1920s worked as a voluntary helper in canteens for the unemployed, and among distressed ex-servicemen.

During the war Colonel White served with his regiment, the Rifle Brigade, then with Military Intelligence, the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office—where he conducted broadcasts and other forms of propaganda for the German armed forces. He founded the BBC's German Forces program and later joined the staff of the Political Warfare Executive as assistant to the head of Political Warfare Executive, Middle East, working in liaison with Raiding Forces, Mediterranean, and other special forces.

After being blown up and injuring his spine in a parachute descent behind the enemy lines he returned to the United Kingdom to undertake secret planning work—but not before he was listed in Gestapo files as **"A Very Dangerous Man."** In 1953, the effect of this injury obliged him to give up his seat in Parliament after eight years' service.

Since the war, Col. White has concentrated on political affairs and writing. Besides contributing articles on a wide range of subjects to principal newspapers throughout Britain and the Commonwealth, he has written six books. These include "The Big Lie," revealing how deception was used as a weapon during the war, "Pattern for Conquest," dealing with world-wide Communist activities, "The Soviet Spy System," and "Sabotage is Suspected."